

BRIGHT STORY READERS.

Grade III.
Imso 569

WHITE LILY

A Red-Indian Story.

By
C. BERNARD RUTLEY.

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THE "A.L." BRIGHT STORY READERS.

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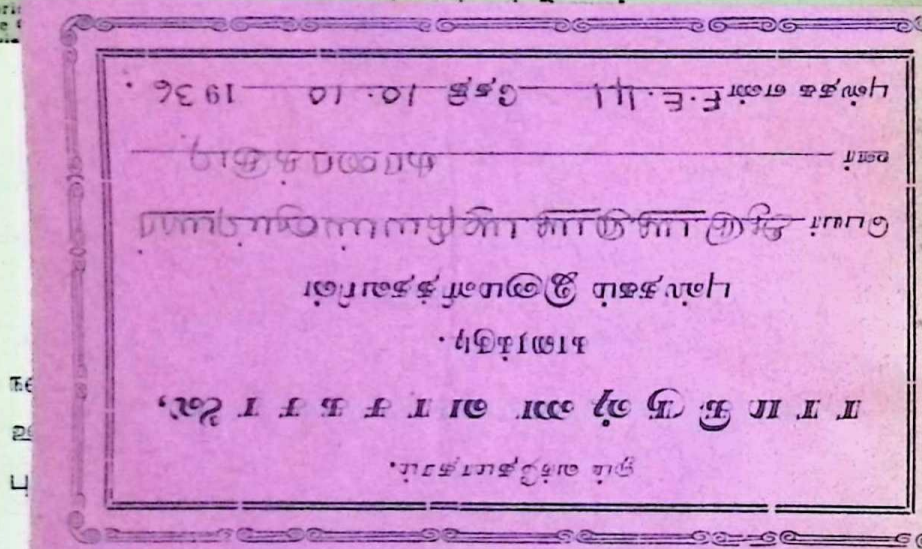
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WHITE LILY.

CHAPTER I.

AN ERRAND OF MERCY.

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ஹிந்து மதாபிமான சங்கம்

காரைக்குடி.

“**W**HAT is the matter, father?” asked Mary Campbell, looking up from the soft doeskin tunic she was decorating with gaily coloured beads, and observing the anxious face of the tall frontiersman who had just entered the living room of the log house.

“Indians, my girl!” answered James Campbell, hanging his long rifle on a couple of buck’s horns that were fixed to one of the rafters of the ceiling.

“But there have been so many rumours lately, father, and nothing has come of them,” said the girl.

“That’s what Jabez, and Smith, and the other men say,” replied the man, sitting down on a rough wooden stool. “But I haven’t dealt with Delawares and Shawanos all these years without knowing the signs. I tell you, lass, there’s trouble coming; and before many weeks have passed, the woods will be full of painted fiends, and the war-whoop will sound from behind every rock and tree. I wish

White Lily.

there was some place to which I could send you and your mother ! This frontier is no place for women."

"A fine place it would be without us !" cried Mary, scornfully. "And as if we should go in any case ! Why, I'm only sixteen, and I've seen two Indian raids. What's the matter with you, dad ? We've got a strong stockade, a block-house, and twenty well-armed men, not to count us women who can handle a rifle almost as well as you men. Let the Indians come, dad ! But take my word, they won't. They'll take too good care of their scalps for that."

"I hope you're right, lass. But remember, I won't have you going for any more long days' fishing up the river. Keep round the clearing, Mary, till the trouble blows over. There's plenty for you to do in the house without tramping the woods."

"But, father," cried Mary, who felt quite dismayed at the thought of losing her cherished freedom, "surely ——"

"No words, lass !" replied the frontiersman sternly. "You're too wild, Mary, and it'll do you no harm to stay round the homestead a bit. Better never go outside the gates, lass, than have your scalp hanging in a Delaware wigwam."

Mary knew her father ; and she knew that when he spoke in that tone, the wisest thing was to obey.

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But day followed day of glorious spring weather, as she watched the misty green of the woods grow deeper and deeper, and listened to the murmur of the distant waterfall beneath which lay her favourite fishing pool. Nothing happened, however, not so much as a single painted face appearing to lend force to her father's fears, and Mary found it very hard indeed to be cooped up within the narrow bounds of the tiny settlement.

So a week passed, and one afternoon, having helped her mother in the house, Mary was sitting behind a clump of willows on the bank of the river, which ran along one side of the clearing, trying to catch some fish. She was not taking much interest in her occupation, however, for the current ran too swiftly to give her much chance of a bite ; and she was thinking how she would like to take her canoe across the river, and then climb the green hill on the opposite shore, when she was startled out of her dreaming by a deep " Huh ! "

Turning swiftly, Mary found herself looking straight into the piercing eyes of a tall Indian who was sitting not a dozen feet away, calmly smoking his pipe.

Mary's first thought was to spring to her feet, and give the alarm. But a second glance at the stranger reassured her. Mary had not lived all her life on the frontier for nothing. She could

follow a trail, and find her way through the forests almost as cleverly as an Indian, whilst with her light rifle she could shoot as straight as any of the men in the little frontier settlement. Moreover, she knew the ways of the Redskins, and it did not take her long to realize that the stranger was on a mission of peace.

He was not a Delaware, she felt sure. Nor was he painted for war, and his rifle lay unheeded by his side.

"White Lily, no fear? Good!" grunted the Indian in deep tones, at last breaking the silence.

"No fear!" answered Mary, smiling. "Friend?"

"Friend, yes! Me no Delaware woman. Me Seneca chief. Great Thunder. See!" And, opening his shirt, he disclosed the figure of a wolf tattooed upon his brawny chest.

"Great Thunder, welcome!" answered Mary, now thoroughly satisfied of the good intentions of the visitor; for the tribes of the Senecas and Iroquois were friendly to the English, and the deadly enemies of their Delaware foes.

For some minutes there was silence, and then, taking the pipe from his mouth, the Indian spoke again. "White Lily, clever? Plenty healing medicine?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Mary, who, like all frontier girls, had been taught how to heal wounds and broken limbs.

“Me, son,” resumed the chief in a proud voice. “Young tree, so !” And he held up a hand to show that the boy was about five feet tall. “Hurt !”—laying his hand on his right foot, the chief uttered the word in a tone of sorrow. “Plenty near. White Lily, come, heap medicine, cure son.” Having made his request, Great Thunder gravely resumed his pipe.

“I’ll come,” answered Mary, jumping to her feet. “Chief, wait here.” With this, she started to run towards the stockade.

Mary had not forgotten her father’s command ; but, she argued with herself, surely he would not object to her helping the son of a friendly Indian. Of course, she would have asked his permission, if it had been possible. But he was out hunting in the woods ; and when Mary reached the log cabin, she found that her mother had gone to visit a neighbour. So, without telling anyone of what she was going to do, she packed the necessary bandages and ointments in a rush basket, and, shouldering her rifle, set off on her errand of mercy.

She found Great Thunder where she had left him. “Huh !” exclaimed the chief in a tone of approval as she appeared, and without further speech he rose to his feet, and strode off along the river bank into the woods.

For a couple of miles Great Thunder led the

way through the forest, sometimes crossing sunlit glades where the greensward was gay with spring flowers, at others skirting the edge of some marsh dotted with alder bushes, or finding a path amidst towering tree trunks which grew so close together that the Indian and the girl walked through a cool green twilight.

At length, however, they reached a spot where a thicket of tall undergrowth barred their path ; and, forcing a way through the tangled mass, they came to a tiny clearing, at one end of which stood a small lean-to of boughs and leaves. Under this rude shelter an Indian boy lay stretched on a couch of spruce twigs, and one glance at his eyes was enough to tell Mary that he was burning with fever.

Going down on her knees beside the rough bed, she gently removed the piece of dirty blanket which had been bound round the injured limb, and laid bare an ankle all swollen and inflamed from a raw bullet wound.

" Delaware dogs ! " exclaimed Great Thunder by way of explanation, in tones of hate and anger.

" Fetch water ! " commanded Mary, and seeing that his son was now in good hands, the Seneca grunted his approval, and set off towards the river.

For some time Mary busied herself in trying to make the Indian lad more comfortable ; this done, she impatiently awaited the return of the father.

An Errand of Mercy.

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How long he was! Surely, by this, he had had time to get to the river and back. Ah! here he was at last, she thought, as a slight sound fell on her ears. She was about to hold out her hands for the water, when she was suddenly gripped from behind, and a swarthy hand was pressed over her mouth, stifling her cries for help.

Mary was strong, but she was helpless in that grip of steel, and in a few seconds she was lying bound and gagged upon the ground, the centre of a ring of painted and befeathered savages. In vain she strained at her bonds. In vain her eyes sought those grim, cruel faces for a sign of pity. What had become of Great Thunder? Had he also fallen a victim to these sudden foes? Were they on their way to attack the settlement? Oh, if she could only get free so as to warn her people of their peril! And then Mary closed her eyes in horror, as, drawing his tomahawk, one of the savages stepped across to the litter of boughs whereon lay the helpless boy.

But the Seneca lad watched his approaching fate without flinching. "Delaware dogs!" he taunted. "Fear not! Young Eagle lies wounded, so come close, brave warriors, and gaze for once upon a *man*. What! do you tremble? Do you fear to strike the son of Great Thunder? Go back to your hoes, O women of the Delawares!"

Exclamations of rage burst from the surrounding warriors, as the wounded boy hurled insult after insult at their heads ; and a dozen knives and tomahawks were flashing in the air, when a sharp command from a huge and fierce-looking warrior quelled the tumult, and stayed the murderous deed.

The next moment Mary's bonds were cut, and she was jerked roughly to her feet, whilst others of the Delawares lifted the wounded boy, and picked up Mary's rifle and basket. Thus laden, the savages left the clearing together with their prisoners ; and, turning their backs upon the river, they struck off into the heart of the trackless forest, towards the country of the Delawares.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE HANDS OF THE REDSKINS.

Hour after hour the Delawares sped swiftly and silently through the forest, whilst Mary, dragged along by a stern-faced warrior, grew more weary and despairing with every step. How she wished now that she had heeded her father's warning, and had kept within sight of the stockade! He would never find her now! She was being carried into captivity by cruel foes, and never, never would she see her home again.

Mary choked back her tears. The Indians should not see a white girl cry! Mile after mile passed, and at last Mary's limbs could support her no farther, and she sank down on the ground, unable to walk another yard.

With a fierce grunt her captor jerked her to her feet; then, seeing that she was indeed too worn out to walk any farther, he flung her across his broad shoulders, and strode off after his companions.

It was a very uncomfortable position, but Mary was so tired that she presently fell into a troubled sleep, from which she was roughly awakened by being dropped heavily to the ground. Opening her eyes, she found herself lying beside the Indian boy, Young Eagle, on the bank of a river—less wide than the one which flowed past her home—

White Lily.

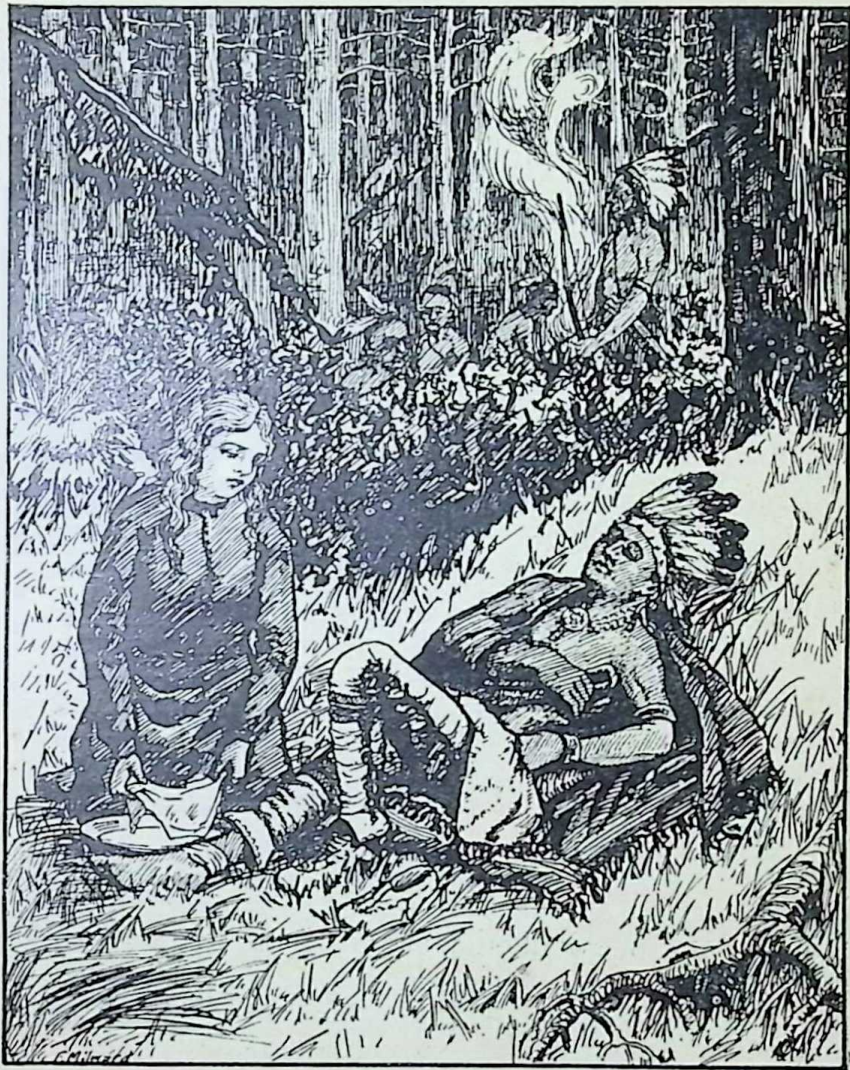
whilst their captors hunted for something amongst the bushes which grew close down to the water.

The Indians were not long in finding the objects of their search, and from a large clump of rushes drew forth three birch-bark canoes. Mary and Young Eagle were laid in one, whilst three painted warriors grasped the paddles. The rest of the Delawares crowded into the remaining canoes, and soon the three light craft were skimming swiftly over the water, driven forward by the powerful strokes of the brawny paddlers.

By this time night was falling, and presently, reaching a little tree-covered island in the middle of the river, the Delawares landed and prepared to camp for the night. Choosing a sheltered spot, they lighted a small fire, before which they started to roast some slices of meat cut from a small deer that had been shot earlier in the day.

Meanwhile, left to herself, Mary fetched some water from the river, and bathed and bandaged Young Eagle's wounded foot. "White Lily good!" grunted the boy gratefully, when she had finished. "Heap powerful medicine. Foot no more hurt." Then in a whisper, "White Lily, no fear. Great Thunder kill Delaware dogs. Take White Lily back to father. Huh!"

Greatly comforted by Young Eagle's words, Mary ate the piece of roast venison which the Indians



'Mary bathed and bandaged Young Eagle's wounded foot.'—Page 10.

White Lily.

threw to her, and then, in spite of the dangers of her position, fell fast asleep.

To the tired girl it seemed but a moment before she was roughly shaken awake again, and saw the first pale light of dawn stealing over the river. After a hasty meal off the remnants of the last night's supper, the Indians continued the journey of the day before. All through the morning the Delawares paddled up the river, between high banks clothed with thick forests ; and, from the way they scanned the shores, Mary guessed that they were passing through an enemy's country.

Presently also they began to look behind. Were they being pursued ? Perhaps even now Great Thunder and her father were near at hand. Mary's heart leapt at the thought. Then, at a low command from the chief, the Delawares turned their canoes towards the right bank of the river, and in a few moments a curtain of rushes and green bushes hid them from the sight of anyone on the water.

Bound hand and foot, and gagged with a strip of her own dress tied over her mouth, Mary could still use her eyes, and following the fierce glances of her captors, she looked fearfully back the way they had come. What was going to happen ? She dreaded now to see her father and Great Thunder come paddling in pursuit, as much as a few minutes ago she had longed for them to rescue her ; for

In the Hands of the Redskins.

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now she feared they would fall into the ambush which her captors had laid for those that followed.

Ten minutes passed and nothing happened. The day was hot and close, and the forest lay still and silent behind them. Suddenly a low "Huh!" from one of the Delawares brought Mary's eyes back to the river. There, rounding a distant bend, was a single small canoe.

Mary gazed at the approaching canoe with surprise. It seemed to be quite empty, and was drifting lazily towards them with the current of the river. Then a slight rocking of the canoe in which she lay made Mary look round, and she saw one of her captors step ashore, and vanish into the thick undergrowth.

Breathlessly Mary watched the slow approach of the mysterious craft. Now it was abreast of their hiding place, and suddenly, from the branches of a tree high above them, a shot rang out. At the same instant a puff of smoke appeared above the side of the distant canoe, followed by a crashing amidst the branches of the tree, as the Delaware who had landed fell from his perch, hit by the unseen marksman.

With cries of rage the Indians seized their rifles, but before they could thrust them through the leafy screen, and fire upon their bold enemy, a painted and befeathered warrior sprang up in the distant canoe. One piercing whoop of triumph he

gave ; and then, seizing a paddle, he sent his little barque skimming away from them down the river, pursued by a hail of bullets. None touched him, however, and with a final yell of derision he drove his canoe round a bend, and disappeared from view.

“ Iroquois scout ! ” grunted Young Eagle in Mary’s ear. “ Delaware dogs heap afraid.”

It did, indeed, seem as though the sight of one of their most deadly enemies had caused the Delawares some anxiety. One of them went to see what had happened to their companion. When he returned, a muttered consultation took place, after which they issued from their hiding place, and began to paddle back the way they had come.

For a mile or two the Red Men retraced their course, and then they turned in again to the shore. This time the whole party landed, each man treading in the steps of the man before him, whilst the last man carefully smoothed away the marks they had made, so that not the sharpest eyes could detect the place where they had stepped ashore. Then, having hidden the canoes, they set off, in single file, through the forest.

The Delawares did not travel so rapidly as they had done the day before. As they advanced, they scanned every bush and thicket ; and once, when a bird whistled in front of them, they halted, whilst two scouts crawled forward to discover if it really

were a bird, or whether there were enemies ahead signalling to each other.

Presently the scouts returned, reporting the way clear, and the Indians moved forward again. Coming to a little brook, they stepped into the water, and waded along its pebbly bed. For some time they followed the course of the stream. On reaching a spot where a large tree hung low over the water, the Delawares pulled themselves and their prisoners up amongst its branches ; then they crawled along the great boughs, and dropped to the ground many yards away from the brook. Having thus landed without leaving a trail upon the bank of the stream to attract the attention of sharp-eyed pursuers, the Indians struck off through the forest up the slope of a long hill.

Mary was beginning to feel very weary, and she was thankful when, on reaching the top of the hill, her captors came to a halt. From where she stood beside Young Eagle, whose bearer had laid him on the ground, she could see mile after mile of billowy tree-tops spread out before her like a great green sea. But it was not the view which had made the Delawares halt, and now caused them to talk together in low tones. Rising straight up in the still afternoon air, from a spot about a mile distant, was a thin grey column of smoke.

Looking back, Mary saw similar smoke columns rising from the forest behind, and knew that, hidden

in the green thickets close at hand, other Indians were signalling to each other. But who were the signallers? Were they friends, or were they enemies?

It was Young Eagle who solved her doubts. "Iroquois!" he grunted. "Friends Young Eagle. Delaware dogs trapped."

But the cunning Delawares were not trapped so easily as Young Eagle thought. They knew perfectly well that there were enemies on their trail—enemies brought there by the Iroquois scout who had killed one of their warriors that very morning; and they were now planning how they could best outwit them. Suddenly the chief appeared to make up his mind; for, telling off four of his warriors to act as rearguard, he turned so that the signal fires were to the right and left of his line of march, and then, with the six remaining braves and the two prisoners, set off along the top of the ridge.

The Delawares now moved forward so swiftly that it was all Mary could do to keep up with them; and once, when she tripped and fell, the Indian who had charge of her pulled her roughly to her feet, and threatened her fiercely with his tomahawk. So, dragged along by her captor, stumbling and gasping for breath, Mary struggled forward, until only the fear of her fierce guardian kept her on her feet.

Presently they entered a narrow ravine with high, wooded sides. Having passed through, the Dela-

wares turned off the trail, and, creeping cautiously back, reached a spot above the ravine where they could see the narrow track below. Here Mary and Young Eagle were bound and gagged, and left lying on the ground, whilst the Delawares hid themselves behind bushes and trees to wait the coming of their Iroquois foes.

From where she lay under a bush, Mary could see the whole length of the trail through the ravine. The afternoon was hot and close. Hardly a leaf stirred, and the narrow track lay quiet and empty. Then, with startling suddenness, Mary saw a brown painted form flit silently into view at a point where the path came round a corner. The Red Man was followed by another, and another, and another, and Mary recognized the four Delaware braves who had stayed behind to guard the rear.

Like shadows the Indians sped swiftly along the trail, every now and then glancing back the way they had come. Then, as silently as they had appeared, they vanished round a distant bend in the path, and once more the ravine lay quiet and deserted in the sunlight.

Minute after minute passed, and Mary, glancing fearfully towards the spot whence the Iroquois must come, could see no sign of any pursuers. And yet surely something had moved! Yes, she was right! Slowly and with great caution, a brown feathered head appeared from behind a bush which

grew at the turn of the path, and a pair of fierce black eyes scanned the trail ahead.

Satisfied with what he saw, the Iroquois brave stepped from behind the bush, and then, bending low and searching every bush and thicket with piercing eyes, advanced along the trail. Behind him came a score of painted and feathered savages, each armed with a long rifle and a gleaming tomahawk.

Swiftly and silently the Iroquois sped forward on the trail of the Delawares ; then, with terrifying suddenness, the afternoon stillness was broken by an appalling war-whoop, and from both sides of the ravine a hail of bullets struck the advancing Indians.

Taken by surprise, half of the Iroquois fell at the first volley ; and, before the survivors could recover, the Delawares were amongst them, slaying with tomahawk and scalping-knife.

The fight was over almost as soon as it had begun. Dismayed by the sudden and unexpected attack, the remaining Iroquois turned to flee. They were pursued by their victorious foes ; and, as the cries of battle died away in the distance, silence once more fell upon the forest.

Half an hour passed ; then, noiselessly as shadows, the Delawares returned and, after loosening their prisoners' bonds, continued their flight through the greenwood.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOME OF THE DELAWARES.

Three days followed, days during which the Delawares and their prisoners journeyed through the green forest until Mary grew so weary that, with the end of each day, she just flopped down on the ground, and went fast asleep before her fierce captors could prepare the evening meal.

No more enemies barred their path to the Delaware encampment. On the morning of the fourth day, as the party were marching along the banks of a narrow stream, the Indians burst into loud whoops and yells, cries which Mary heard faintly answered from the distance. Thereupon her captors hastened their steps, and in a few minutes they reached the edge of a large forest glade, through which ran the river. On its banks a number of skin tents were arranged in orderly rows ; and, as the Delawares and their prisoners stepped out of the forest, crowds of Indian women and children came rushing to meet them, followed in a more dignified manner by a large number of Delaware braves.

At the sight of Mary and Young Eagle, the Indian women broke into savage cries of hate and rage, and would have attacked them with stones

and sticks, had not Great Elk, the Delaware chief, fiercely bidden them leave his prisoners alone. Then, leading Mary and Young Eagle into the village, Great Elk cast them into an empty wigwam, whilst he sought the council chamber of his tribe, and told the assembled chiefs all that he had learned during his journey to the country of the Pale-faces.

Left alone with Young Eagle, Mary's thoughts were very unhappy. She had long ago given up all hope of rescue. Her father would never be able to trace her through all those miles of trackless forest. Besides, there was another thing worrying her. What had Great Elk and his warriors been doing so near the settlements of the English? Was there, indeed, some truth in her father's fears of an Indian rising, and had she been captured by a scouting party that was spying out the land before the tribes went on the war-path?

Mary was very troubled. If only she could do something! But she was a prisoner, she——

"White Lily heap sad. Tell Young Eagle." It was the voice of the Indian boy that broke in upon Mary's thoughts.

"I was thinking of all the white people back in the settlements, Young Eagle," answered Mary, speaking slowly so that the Indian boy should understand. "I am wondering if the Delaware dogs are going on the war-path against the English."

“ Huh ! Heap bad ! ” exclaimed Young Eagle, and for some minutes he lay thinking. Then, in a whisper which only Mary could hear, “ Young Eagle get well quick. Heap ill to Delaware dogs. White Lily tell Young Eagle all she sees.” Mary nodded her head in understanding.

Under her care Young Eagle’s foot was healing rapidly, but the Indians must not know. If they thought that the boy was still unable to walk, they would not keep such strict watch over their prisoners. Meanwhile, she would keep her eyes and ears open, and try to discover the real intentions of the Indians ; then, perhaps, she and Young Eagle might be able to escape and carry warning to the settlements.

Presently a young squaw brought food, and after they had eaten, Mary ventured out into the village. No one interfered with her ; and though the naked little brown children stood round at a distance, and gazed at her wonderingly, the squaws and braves took no notice of her whatever.

As she wandered round the village, Mary took careful note of all that was going on. The warriors were sitting before their tents, busily cleaning and oiling their long rifles, and sharpening their tomahawks and long curved knives ; women were grinding corn, or hoeing in the fields, whilst in an open space a number of young squaws were hard at work, building a monster wigwam.

White Lily.

Returning to Young Eagle, Mary told him all that she had seen. "Bad, heap bad!" exclaimed the Indian boy, when she had finished. "Delaware dogs going to speak to Great Turtle. Great Turtle heap big spirit! Tell them whether to fight the Pale-faces or not. Heap bad! Huh!"

For the rest of the day Mary could not get another word out of Young Eagle; and when Great Elk came to visit them, the Indian boy lay with closed eyes, and pretended to be very ill indeed. "Huh!" grunted the chief at last; and, satisfied that Young Eagle was too ill to attempt to escape, he strode out of the tent, leaving them alone.

So two days passed, and Mary might easily have escaped by herself during the night, for no watch was kept upon her. But she had no idea in which direction her home lay, and, besides, her captors would soon have overtaken her in the forest. Her one hope lay in Young Eagle, who lay still and silent, doing nothing except eat and sleep.

On the third day the women finished building the great wigwam; and, as soon as night fell, Mary saw the warriors of the tribe crowding in at the entrance. A great ceremony was about to take place; the chief magician of the tribe was going to consult the Great Turtle. Knowing something of Indian customs, Mary knew that inside that monster wigwam it would be decided whether or not the

The Home of the Delawares.

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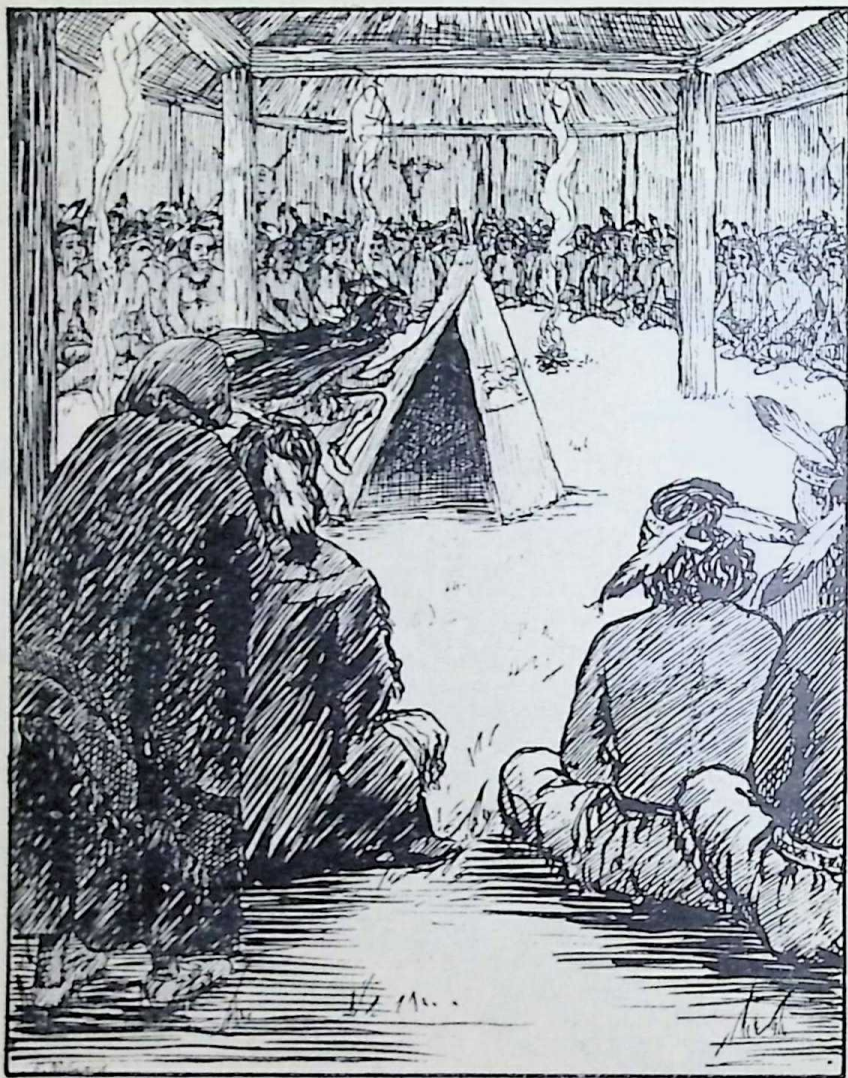
Delawares should go on the war-path against the Pale-faces.

At the thought Mary decided to risk all in trying to see what took place. She felt she must know for certain what the Indians intended to do. She could not bear the suspense any longer ; so, wrapping herself in a dark blanket, she stole silently through the village towards the great building. Creeping along in the shadows, she at length reached the entrance, slipped silently through the doorway, and took up her position unnoticed just inside.

A strange sight met her gaze. The great building was dimly lighted by a number of smoking fires ; and, by their ruddy glow, Mary saw the warriors of the Delawares seated in a great circle round an empty space in the centre of the wigwam. Silence reigned, whilst every eye was fixed upon a tiny tent of skins in the middle of the cleared space.

Suddenly the chief magician of the tribe sprang into the circle, entered the tiny tent, and then closed the entrance behind him. Immediately the silence was broken by hideous yells, shrieks, and cries of pain coming from inside the small tent, whilst the whole structure rocked to and fro as though some terrific struggle were taking place inside.

Then, as suddenly as it had begun, the turmoil ceased, and a low whine came from the tent, followed by the voice of the magician, saying that the Great



'Suddenly the chief magician of the tribe sprang into the circle.'—Page 23.

Turtle had arrived, and was ready to hear any questions the warriors of the Delawares might wish to ask.

Thereupon Great Elk arose ; and, having told of his visit to the country of the Pale-faces, and of all that he had seen and heard, he finished by asking if victory would attend the Delawares, should they take the war-path against the English.

No sooner had Great Elk finished speaking than the little tent was again violently shaken, whilst a terrible, blood-curdling yell echoed through the great wigwam, followed by perfect silence.

Mary, crouching against the wall, had seen and heard all that passed ; and, from stray words picked up here and there, she had understood much of what Great Elk had said. Now she waited in a fever of impatience for the end of the ceremony.

Half an hour passed, half an hour of unbroken silence, and then once more the low whine, which the Indians believed to be the voice of the Great Turtle, sounded from inside the small tent. Presently it ceased, and the voice of the magician was heard speaking.

“ Chiefs and warriors of the Delawares,” he said, “ since you told him your wish, the Great Turtle has flown far across the forest, and has visited all the villages of the Pale-faces. The Great Turtle has told me that the Pale-faces are asleep. They think

the Red Men are their friends. Their hatchets are rusty, and they can no longer shoot straight. Go, therefore, chiefs and warriors of the Delawares. Many scalps and much plunder and glory await you."

As the magician ceased speaking, the assembled braves burst into shouts and yells of savage joy, in the midst of which Mary slipped out of the wigwam, and ran, as fast as her feet would carry her, back to her tent.

"Wake up, Young Eagle!" she cried, shaking the Indian boy, who lay fast asleep on a pile of skins. "The Great Turtle has told the Delawares to go on the war-path against the Pale-faces."

"Huh!" grunted the boy, opening his eyes. "Young Eagle knows. White Lily, no worry. White Lily, shut eyes, go sleep. Young Eagle's foot heap better." And, without another word, he turned over and went fast asleep again.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WAR-DANCE.

Mary hardly slept a wink that night. Had she known which way to run, she would certainly have run off into the woods, and tried to reach her parents and friends with warning of the peril which threatened them.

Her one hope lay in Young Eagle, and Young Eagle still seemed to think of nothing but eating and sleeping, and resting his wounded leg. Even the next day, when Mary begged him to help her to escape, he only grunted and said, "White Lily, no worry. Trust Young Eagle."

All that day Mary wandered about the village in a fever of anxiety and impatience. She was determined to escape that night and try to reach her home, whether Young Eagle would accompany her or not.

The Delawares now made no secret of their preparations for war. The warriors were painting themselves ; and so terrible did some of them look, with their faces and bodies smeared with black, red, yellow, and white paint, that the sight of them almost made Mary scream.

In another part of the clearing Mary came across

a tall post firmly planted in the ground. Whilst some women were painting the post a brilliant red, others were preparing great bonfires of boughs and twigs.

“Huh ! Heap bad !” exclaimed Young Eagle, when, later on, Mary told him all that she had seen. “Delaware dogs, make war-dance.” Then, seeing how miserable Mary looked, he repeated, “White Lily, no worry. Trust Young Eagle.”

At that moment a footstep sounded outside, and Great Elk, hideously painted for war, entered the tent. For a whole minute he stood gazing fiercely down upon Young Eagle, and then, reaching out a brawny hand, he grasped the boy by one shoulder, and jerked him roughly to his feet. “Stand up, dog of a Seneca !” he growled.

Young Eagle tried to do as he was bid ; but no sooner did he put his wounded foot to the ground than he swayed, and seemed to turn dizzy, and he would have fallen, had not Mary sprung forward, and caught him in her strong young arms. “Young Eagle heap bad !” she cried, as she gently lowered the boy to his couch of skins.

“Huh !” grunted Great Elk in reply ; and, satisfied that his prisoner was still too ill to escape, he turned and strode from the tent.

As soon as his footsteps had died away in the distance, Young Eagle opened his eyes, and, smiling

up at Mary, he murmured, " Delaware chief think Young Eagle heap bad. Huh ! "

That night, as soon as darkness fell, there was a great coming and going in the village. Creeping out of her tent, Mary made her way towards the spot where she had seen the women at work in the morning. There she found all the warriors of the tribe, painted and feathered, sitting in a great silent circle round the tall red post, whilst women were going from bonfire to bonfire, setting the great piles of wood alight, until the clearing was as bright as day.

It was a thrilling and terrible scene. There were rows and rows of fierce painted faces, upon which the bonfires cast a ruddy glow, backed by the dark mass of the trackless forest ; and Mary trembled, as she thought that all those savage warriors were about to be let loose upon the unsuspecting English.

Suddenly a huge brave rose to his feet, and, springing into the empty space within the circle, began to recite all the valiant deeds he had done. He told his hearers how many Pale-faces he had slain, and how he had won the scalps which hung in his wigwam. Gradually he worked himself up into a perfect frenzy of excitement. He yelled the terrible war-whoop ; he brandished his tomahawk above his head ; he stamped, and sprang into the air, and went through all the motions of fighting and

slaying an enemy, until, suddenly, with a terrific yell, he buried his hatchet deep in the tall red post.

Instantly a second warrior sprang into the circle, and began to dance and sing as the first had done. After him came another and another, until all the warriors of the tribe were dancing and stamping round the red post, slashing with their knives and hatchets at imaginary enemies, and yelling the war-whoop at the top of their voices.

So terrific was the din that Mary quite failed to hear a voice which whispered in her ear, "White Lily, come," and it was not until he touched her on her arm that she turned, and beheld Young Eagle lying flat on the ground beside her. "White Lily, follow Young Eagle," he whispered; then, placing his fingers on his lips to show her that she must be silent, he turned, and began to crawl off through the shadows towards the dark fringe of the forest.

The Delaware warriors and their squaws were too much occupied with the war-dance to take any notice of the prisoners; and, without a sound, Mary turned and followed Young Eagle. Reaching the cover of the forest, the boy rose to his feet, and from under a bush drew forth two rifles with powder horns and bags of bullets complete. With a thrill of joy, Mary recognized her own light rifle with which she could shoot so well, and as she slung the powder horn and bullet pouch across her shoulders, she asked

in a whisper how Young Eagle had obtained the arms.

“ Huh ! ” grunted Young Eagle in tones of huge contempt. “ Delaware dogs, blind owls ! Think Young Eagle heap ill, no watch. Young Eagle lie still, foot get strong and well, find rifles when Delawares dancing. Now escape and warn White Lily’s friends. Come.” With that he turned, and led the way into the dark forest.

CHAPTER V.

THE FLIGHT THROUGH THE FOREST.

It was a wonder to Mary how Young Eagle found his way through the forest, so dark it was. She herself could not see a yard ahead, but never once did Young Eagle falter. Gradually, as they drew farther and farther away from the Delaware village, the yells of the dancers died in the distance, until no sounds broke the silence of the forest save the soft sighing of the wind in the tree-tops, or the occasional cry of a night-bird.

Hour after hour the fugitives sped forward ; and so overjoyed was Mary at being free, and so anxious was she to reach her friends and warn them of the peril which threatened them, that she felt no fatigue. Presently, however, Young Eagle began to move forward more slowly ; and when Mary urged him to greater speed, he whispered, " Young Eagle smell smoke."

Mary sniffed the light breeze, but the only scent which she could smell was the fresh woody fragrance of the forest. Yet clearly Young Eagle feared the presence of enemies. With every yard his movements became more cautious. Slowly and carefully he placed one foot in front of the other, so that not so much as the snapping of a twig, or the faintest rustle of a leaf beneath his feet, betrayed his pres-

ence. And Mary, following close behind, copied his movements in everything.

For some time they strode cautiously forward, and then Mary suddenly noticed a feeble glow in the forest ahead. Brighter and brighter grew the light as they advanced, until, on reaching the brink of a large hollow, they saw below them a flickering camp-fire, round which squatted a score or more of painted Indians.

One glance, and Young Eagle turned. As silently as a snake, he wormed his way through the undergrowth. Then, having put a safe distance between themselves and the Indian camp, he and Mary set off at a brisk trot through the forest.

"Shawano war-party!" he grunted, when Mary asked him who the Indians were. "Forest full of Indians. Heap danger! No talk!"

At last, just when Mary felt she could go no farther, Young Eagle came to a halt, and having pushed his way into the midst of a thick clump of undergrowth, he squatted down on the ground. "White Lily, rest," he said. "Young Eagle watch. Plenty sleep last three days, no tired. Huh!"

Mary was only too glad to take him at his word, and she had scarcely laid her head on the ground when she was fast asleep. Yet to her it seemed but a moment before she was awakened by a hand on her shoulder, whilst another covered her mouth to prevent her from crying out.

"White Lily, follow. Heap quiet!" whispered Young Eagle in her ear. "Shawano coming." With that he set off again through the forest.

It was still dark, and Mary could hear no sound which might account for their sudden flight. They were heading back the way they had come, on a line a little to one side of the track they had followed some hours before. Suddenly Young Eagle stopped and, pressing Mary down upon the ground, laid a hand upon her mouth to command silence.

Some distance ahead a light was bobbing amongst the trees. Nearer and nearer it came, sometimes moving hardly at all, at others advancing more quickly; and presently Mary saw that it was a torch carried by a solitary Indian who, bent almost double, was slowly following the trail they had made earlier in the night.

With bated breath, Mary watched the approach of the savage. If he discovered them, a single yell would bring his companions to his aid, whilst the report of a rifle would bring every Indian for miles around hot upon their trail.

Nearer and nearer approached the Shawano warrior. Suddenly, for a moment, he stood upright, and the flickering torchlight played full on his painted body. Just in time Mary choked back a cry of terror. For one horrible instant she had thought that it was a skeleton which was trailing them; then

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she saw that the Shawano brave had outlined the bones of his body in white paint, with an effect terrible to behold.

Now the tracker was opposite their hiding place, and so near that Mary could have reached out and touched him. But, all unaware that those he trailed were so close at hand, the Shawano warrior passed slowly on, his eyes fixed upon the trail before him.

Turning to where Young Eagle had been, Mary discovered, with a sudden pang of fear, that he was no longer there. Where had he gone? She had not heard him go. Oh! *why* had he left her alone in that dark forest? Desperately Mary gazed around her, striving to pierce the blackness. What should she do? Surely he would come back to her!

Hark! A smothered cry had come from somewhere ahead. Crouching down on the ground, Mary trembled all over. The sight of that hideously painted warrior had scared her dreadfully, and she reflected that not so very far away were twenty or more of his companions.

Were they also following her trail? Fearfully she gazed into the dark thickets around her, until her eyes ached with the strain. What was *that*? Something had moved. It was something darker than the surrounding darkness. In an agony of fear, Mary was about to scream, when low-spoken

words fell upon her ears. "Young Eagle comes," she heard. "White Lily, no fear."

It was Young Eagle. He had come back to her, and so great was Mary's relief that she caught hold of his hand for fear he should vanish again. "Where have you been, Young Eagle?" she whispered. "I thought you had gone away and left me."

"White Lily thought that?" answered Young Eagle reproachfully. "White Lily heal Young Eagle. Young Eagle grateful. Young Eagle, White Lily's brother; never leave her. Huh!" Then in a voice of pride he added, "Young Eagle no longer a boy. Young Eagle a *man*. Shawano warrior no more follow the war-path. His scalp shall hang in Young Eagle's wigwam. Come!"

Without another word he turned, and their flight through the forest was continued.

Presently the darkness grew less deep. Trees could be made out some distance away. Here and there the busy twitterings of birds came from the branches overhead, and Mary realized that the night of terror was over, and that dawn was at hand.

But now, with no friendly darkness to hide them, the danger of discovery by some fierce band of Indians became greater. Besides, both Mary and Young Eagle knew that, sooner or later, the Shawano warriors they had seen squatting round the camp-



'So great was Mary's relief that she caught hold of his hand.'—Page 36.

fire would discover the loss of their comrade, and then, burning with revenge, would follow hot on their trail.

Presently a new and welcome sound fell upon the ears of the fugitives ; it was the distant murmur of a brook. Hastening forward, Mary and Young Eagle flung themselves down on the bank, and drank deeply of the cool, sweet water. Mary also bathed her face and hands, and then Young Eagle, stepping into the stream, led the way along its pebbly bed.

Mary was now so tired that she could hardly put one foot before the other ; but the brook, she knew, would break their trail, and perhaps save them from being overtaken by their savage enemies, so she struggled bravely forward.

Presently, after they had waded some distance along the stream, Young Eagle stopped suddenly, and crouched down behind a bush. They had reached a spot where some poor frontiersman had once cleared away the forest, and built himself a home. But the clearing had long since been overgrown with bushes and small trees, and the frontiersman, slain probably by some Indian war-party, had vanished from the scene, leaving his home to fall into ruins.

There it stood, a small log cabin with a gaping hole in the bark roof, and the door hanging half-open on broken hinges. A huge tree shaded it from

the sun ; and, in spite of its forlorn appearance, the tiny cabin looked so peaceful that Mary longed to go inside and rest her tired limbs.

“ Young Eagle, can’t we rest a little while ? ” she asked. “ I’m so tired ! ”

“ Young Eagle knows,” answered the boy ; and he again turned to watch the clearing, his keen eyes searching every bush and thicket for signs of possible enemies.

But the clearing lay silent and deserted in the sunshine, and presently, satisfied that no enemies were lurking near, Young Eagle raised his eyes to the tree above them. It was a great tree, and the branches hung low over the stream, reaching almost to the door of the cabin. Young Eagle was minded to do as the Delawares had done, when they carried him captive through the forest, and leave the stream by way of the tree, so that no tell-tale traces should be left upon the bank.

Having handed his rifle to Mary, he sprang lightly into the air and, grasping a low branch, hauled himself up on to its broad surface. Then, taking the two rifles from the girl below, he made his way amongst the branches, and dropped the rifles to the ground on the soft earth before the cabin door.

Returning to Mary, Young Eagle reached down a hand, and with a spring and a pull she too was

safely landed upon the branch, the soft moccasins of the fugitives leaving no mark upon the bark of the tree. Crawling along the bough, they lowered themselves carefully to the ground in front of the log cabin.

Inside, the hut was littered thickly with dead leaves. Sinking down upon their softness, Mary was almost instantly fast asleep, the last thing she saw being Young Eagle carefully smoothing away the few tracks they had left outside the cabin door.

The sun mounted high in the sky, and began to sink towards the west ; and still the tired girl slept on. But, at length, she stirred in her sleep. Fierce, harsh voices fell upon her ears ; and, opening her eyes, she saw Young Eagle kneeling by her side, his rifle grasped ready in one hand, whilst with the other he signed to her to keep still.

The voices came from outside the hut, and glancing through a chink in the logs, Mary saw a sight which sent a cold chill of fear through her. Standing half-way between the stream and the cabin, talking together, and every now and then shooting hawklike glances towards the log hut, were the Shawano warriors they had seen the night before.

CHAPTER VI.

A HELPING HAND.

Mary lay quite still, hardly daring to breathe, whilst Young Eagle knelt ready to shoot, the moment that the Indians outside discovered them. But, for some reason or other, the Shawanos seemed unwilling to come any nearer. They pointed to the ground, and then, returning to the stream, carefully examined every inch of the bank. Clearly they thought the fugitives had passed that way ; but, finding no tracks upon the bank, they were uncertain whether or not they were hiding in the cabin.

“ Why don’t they come inside and look ? ” wondered Mary, and then, in a flash, the real reason entered her head. The Shawanos were *afraid*. To their superstitious minds the deserted cabin was haunted ; and, unless they were certain that their enemies were within, they would not enter.

For ten minutes longer the Indians walked up and down the clearing, examining every inch of the ground, but never coming very near to the cabin. Then, seeming to be satisfied that the pursued were not there, they set off upstream, and once again the clearing lay still and silent in the afternoon sunlight.

“ Huh ! ” grunted Young Eagle in tones of relief. “ Shawano dogs afraid. Think spirit live in cabin. Huh ! ”

With the danger of discovery over, Mary sud-

denly realized that she was ravenously hungry. Young Eagle had luckily brought some food away from the Delaware village, and they made a hearty meal, after which Mary insisted that the Indian boy should rest, whilst she kept watch.

Slowly the sun sank, and the shadows of evening lay long upon the clearing. Yet still Young Eagle slept on, whilst Mary kept anxious watch through a chink in the wall of the hut. But the clearing lay quiet and deserted in the golden sunshine, and no more Indians passed by, though once Mary thought she heard the sound of a shot far away in the forest.

At last, just as it was getting dark, Young Eagle stirred, and sat up. "White Lily, no see anything?" he asked.

"Nothing, Young Eagle," answered Mary, "but I once thought I heard a shot a long way off."

"Huh!" grunted the boy. "Shawano or Delaware dog hunting."

The fugitives now made preparations to depart; and, after they had eaten sparingly of their small remaining supply of food, Young Eagle stole forth from the cabin, and scouted stealthily round the clearing to make sure that no enemies lay concealed near at hand.

Presently Mary, waiting impatiently in the hut, heard the low hoot of an owl twice repeated; on which she picked up her rifle, and joined Young Eagle at the edge of the forest.

Apparently they were no longer to follow the course of the stream ; for, turning his back upon the brook, Young Eagle led the way deep into the forest with long, swift strides. The moon, which had been hidden by clouds the night before, was now shining brightly, dappling the ground beneath the giant trees with silvery tracery, so that travelling was much easier. But Mary soon found herself wishing for the friendly covering darkness of the previous night ; for who could tell what fierce eyes might catch sight of them, as they flitted across the bright open spaces of the forest ?

Young Eagle must have had the same fears ; for he kept to the shadows as much as possible, and, when they had to cross a glade bright with moonlight, he stood for a long time searching the shadows and thickets with his eyes, and questioning every sound that broke the silence of the night, before leading the way across the open space.

Yet, in spite of all their caution, the fugitives almost came to grief. They had reached the edge of a wide glade filled with dazzling moonlight. Long and anxiously Mary and Young Eagle searched the dark edge of the surrounding forest. Seeing no sign of any foes, they were about to make a dash for the opposite trees, when, from a point not twenty yards away, a tall warrior, with a huge feathered head-dress, stepped forth into the open. After him, in perfect silence, came a long line of painted

braves, moving one behind the other in single file, until Mary had counted over a hundred dark figures flitting swiftly across the glade.

"Delawares!" muttered Young Eagle in Mary's ear, as the war-party disappeared amidst the opposite trees. Then he rose to his feet, and led the way round the glade, keeping well within the deepest shadows, lest fierce eyes should be watching to see if any followed upon the trail of the war-party ahead.

Hour after hour the fugitives pressed forward, seeing and hearing no more of their savage enemies, until, in a patch of deepest shadow, Young Eagle halted to allow Mary to rest awhile. "Come to river soon," he muttered in Mary's ear. "Big river. Goes by White Lily's village. Young Eagle find canoe. Reach White Lily's father heap quick. Huh!"

Encouraged by this news, Mary was soon ready to start forward again, and they were just about to set off, when, from a great way ahead, there came the low, muffled echo of heavy firing. For some minutes Young Eagle stood listening intently; then, turning in the direction of the distant sounds, he led the way through the forest at a brisk trot.

Mile after mile they covered, the sounds gradually becoming louder as they advanced. Once, when they paused a moment, Mary asked Young Eagle what was happening, and where they were going.

"Delaware dogs attacking Pale-face wigwam,"

answered the boy. "White Lily, no fear. Wigwam strong; other side of river. Pale-faces kill Delawares. Heap plenty canoe though. What Young Eagle want. Huh!"

From the sound of the firing, now quite near at hand, it was plain that the garrison of the block-house were putting up a vigorous defence against their enemies. Suddenly, from no great distance ahead, a deep ruddy glow was to be seen betwixt the trees, and its appearance was followed by a chorus of ear-splitting yells.

"White Lily, no fear," said Young Eagle as Mary halted, dismayed by the terrific clamour. "Delawares set fire to haystack. No Delawares this side big river. All safe!"

It was as Young Eagle had said. The forest around them was deserted. On reaching the bank of a broad stream, which was glowing ruddily in the light of the flames, the fugitives stood gazing upon a truly terrifying scene.

On the opposite bank of the river, in the centre of a large clearing, a block-house stood out sharply dark against the leaping flames of a blazing haystack. Every now and then stabbing points of light burst from the dark building, each followed by the report of a rifle, whilst from the black fringe of the surrounding forest came the yells and answering fire of the attacking Indians. Nearer at hand, moored to the farther shore of the river, were the

dozen or more canoes by which the Indians had crossed over to the attack.

From the angry cries of the besiegers it was plain that they were suffering severely from the fire of the Pale-faces. Seeing that their attention was fully engaged, Young Eagle slipped into the water, and swimming across the river to the opposite shore, he cut loose all the canoes but one. Then, their owners all unaware of what was happening, he sent the light craft floating out on to the river, where, borne along by the rapid current, they soon drifted out of sight round a distant bend. With the remaining canoe, Young Eagle crossed to where Mary awaited him in the shadows of the opposite bank.

“ Delaware dogs no follow,” grunted the boy triumphantly, as he rose dripping out of the water, pushing the captured canoe before him. “ White Lily, get in. Young Eagle paddle heap quick.”

“ Oh ! can’t we do something to help those poor people ? ” cried Mary, glancing across at the block-house. “ Look, Young Eagle, the Delawares are going to break in the door ! ”

The block-house, indeed, seemed in great danger of being taken by assault. With terrific yells the Indians had suddenly broken forth from their cover, and were charging across the clearing towards the building, whilst a dozen or more braves, carrying a tree trunk, made straight for the door.

Fast and furiously cracked the rifles of the besieged, and many a Red Man bit the dust. But, though numbers fell, the garrison of the block-house were too few to drive off the remainder. The heavy log was being swung back to batter down the door, when, from the other side of the river, two shots rang out. Two Redskins fell, and the log dropped to the ground.

The attack from their rear was so unexpected that, for a moment, the Red Men hesitated. Then, as two more shots rang out, whilst the besieged, heartened by the unlooked-for aid, redoubled their fire, the Indians were seized with a sudden panic, and turned to flee. Some dashed into the forest, pursued by the bullets of the white people, whilst others raced towards the river bank where they had left their canoes.

But the canoes were no longer there ; and, whilst the panic-stricken Indians halted amazed, a solitary craft shot out from the opposite shore. Seated in it were two paddlers ; and, as the canoe skimmed swiftly down the river, one of them raised his rifle, and fired a parting shot at the furious Redskins. Then, with a yell of triumph, he seized his paddle again, and a second later the canoe had disappeared round a bend in the stream.

“ Huh ! ” grunted Young Eagle, as he and Mary plied their paddles. “ Pale-faces safe. Delaware dogs heap afraid. Huh ! ”

CHAPTER VII.

BESET BY FOES.

“ Paddle till sun wake up ; hide daytime ; paddle to-morrow night, one, two, three, four hour ; leave canoe where river gets angry ; march through forest three mile ; reach White Lily’s wigwam. White Lily’s father, mother all safe ; hug White Lily in arms. Good ? Huh ! ” remarked Young Eagle presently.

“ But *must* we hide in the daytime ? ” questioned Mary anxiously. “ Can’t we keep straight on, Young Eagle ? ”

“ Think not,” replied the Indian boy. “ Heap danger. White Lily no want to lose scalp now.”

Thereafter Young Eagle fell silent, whilst he and Mary sent the canoe skimming rapidly down the river. The forest lay dark and still on either side of the swiftly-flowing stream, and the fugitives saw no more of their enemies. Presently Mary noticed a lightening of the darkness ; and, as the light of dawn stole over the river, Young Eagle began to look anxiously around for some safe hiding place where they could spend the hours of daylight.

At last he espied the spot he wanted, a tiny inlet, surrounded by thick undergrowth ; and, steering the canoe shorewards, Young Eagle found a place where the tiny craft was screened on all sides by the

abundance of bushes and rushes. Here the fugitives ate the last of their food ; and then, at a sign from Young Eagle, Mary curled herself up in the bottom of the canoe and went to sleep, whilst the Indian boy prepared to keep watch, his long rifle lying across his knees.

It was noon when Mary awoke, and for some moments she lay idly gazing up at the green roof of leaves above her, through which trickled little golden beams of sunlight. But suddenly, with a pang of dismay, Mary realized that she was alone, and that Young Eagle no longer kept watch in the bows of the canoe. Surely he would have told her if he were going far ! He must be somewhere close at hand.

Sitting up, Mary strained her eyes and ears for signs of her missing companion ; but she saw nothing but green leaves, whilst the shrill pipe of some bird was the only sound which broke the noonday silence.

Mary dared not call, for fear of attracting the attention of some lurking band of Indians ; and she dared not leave the canoe, lest Young Eagle returned in her absence. Lying down again, she strove to quiet her anxiety ; and finding a tiny gap in the foliage which screened the canoe, she lay patiently watching the opposite side of the inlet, some twenty yards away.

Suddenly something moved ; and, at sight of

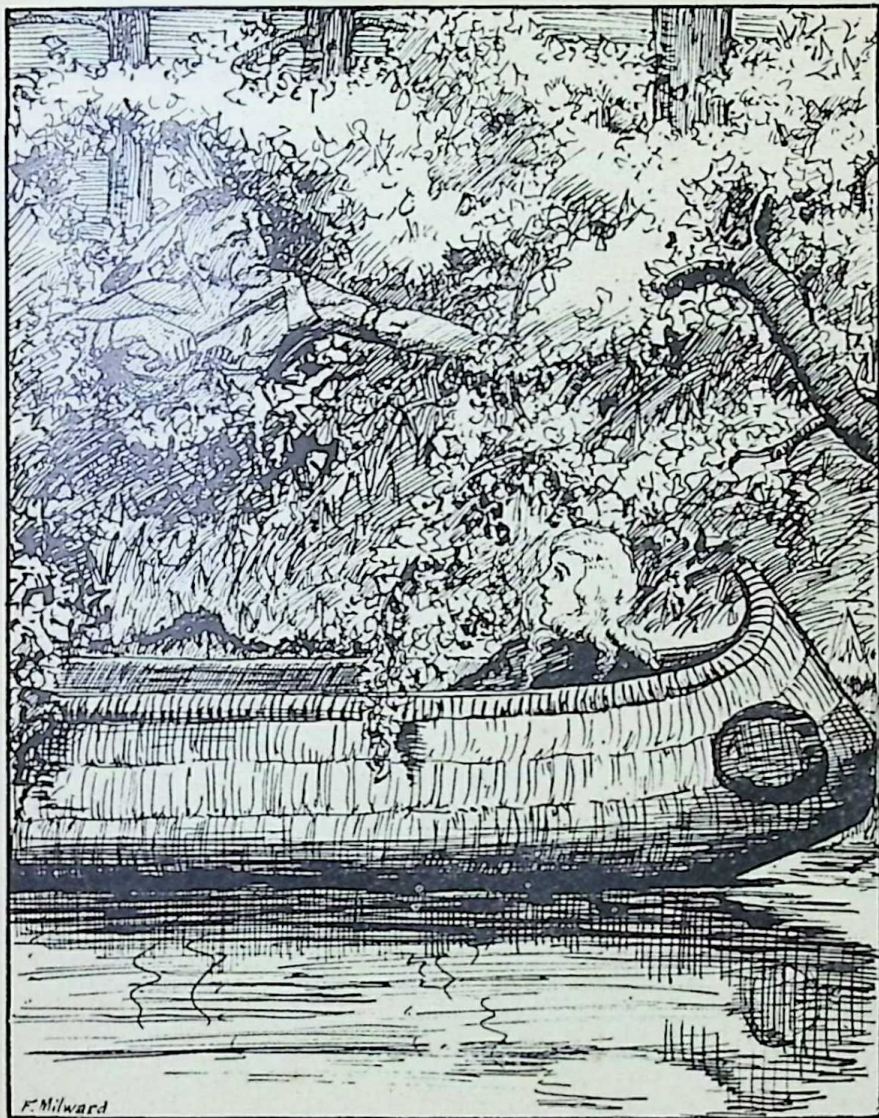
the moving thing, a cold shiver of fear ran through the watching girl. A brown hand was creeping slowly round the edge of the tiny gap, pulling the leaves and twigs aside. The next moment, Mary was gazing full into the fierce painted face of a huge Indian warrior.

For some moments, the two gazed at each other in silence. Mary was too dazed by the greatness of her danger to move, whilst the Indian was listening intently for any sign of the white girl's companions, for he knew she would not be in that part of the country alone and unprotected.

At last, satisfied that there was no one near at hand to interfere, the Indian stretched out his hand to catch hold of the girl, and Mary, springing to her feet, screamed aloud in her terror. Hardly had the sound left her lips, when there came the sharp crack of a rifle from the bushes near by. The painted face and the clutching hand disappeared, as their owner pitched forward into the water, shot through the head.

The next moment, Young Eagle slid silently out of the undergrowth. Signing to Mary to help him, he thrust the canoe through the screen of bushes, and with strong strokes sent the little craft skimming towards the centre of the river.

No sooner had they gained the open than a terrific yell rose from the forest behind, and a hail of



‘For some moments, the two gazed at each other in silence.’—Page 50.

bullets struck the water around them. The danger nerved the fugitives to greater efforts, so that before the Indians on the bank could reload their rifles, Mary and Young Eagle were out of range.

"Huh!" grunted the Indian boy contemptuously. "Delaware dogs no good shoot." Then, in answer to Mary's questions, he continued, "Forest full of Delawares. Going to attack White Lily's home to-night. Young Eagle listened at their council fire. Young Eagle, White Lily heap hurry; warn White Lily's mother, father."

For three hours the fugitives paddled down the river, seeing no more of the Delawares. Mary now began to recognize her surroundings. On that bluff she and the other children of the settlement had picnicked one sunny day only the summer before. Four miles ahead the river formed a dangerous, boulder-strewn cataract. There they would have to land, leave the canoe, and then make their way through the forest to the settlement three miles off.

Mary was lost in a dream of homecoming, when a grunt from Young Eagle made her look behind. There, some half a mile away, going three feet to their one, and gaining on them rapidly, was a large canoe containing six Delaware braves.

Mary needed no urging from Young Eagle to paddle her hardest; and, though her whole body ached from head to foot, she and Young Eagle

managed for a time to keep the same distance between themselves and their pursuers. But not for long ! The Delawares came creeping closer and closer, their fierce hearts filled with hatred for the Seneca boy and the white girl who were trying to reach the Pale-face village with the news that the Delawares were on the war-path.

Now the fugitives could plainly hear the roar of the cataract ahead, and they began to steer towards the landing-place. If they could gain the shelter of the forest before they were overtaken, they might hold off the Delawares with their rifles, and gain the settlement after all. And then Young Eagle suddenly brought the head of the canoe round, and with powerful strokes sent her skimming towards the centre of the river again, whilst a yell of triumph broke from the pursuers, now not more than a hundred yards behind.

With a sickening feeling of despair Mary saw the cause of their joy. At the head of the cataract, on the very point of land where the fugitives should have gone ashore, a number of painted Indians had suddenly appeared. Mary and Young Eagle were caught in a trap. They could not go back—they could not land—the only way lay down the cataract ahead, and *that* meant almost certain disaster.

Caught in the current, the frail canoe now sped with ever-increasing speed towards the boiling rapids

ahead. The Delawares dared not fire their rifles, lest the sound should reach the settlement three miles away, and give warning of their presence in the woods. So far the fugitives were lucky. The next moment, the canoe gave a sickening lurch ; then, with the speed of an arrow, it shot downwards through clouds of spray, and great curling waves.

It was all over in a few seconds. There was a sudden crash, and everything seemed to go to pieces ; and the next moment, Mary was being buffeted and tossed hither and thither in the raging fury of the rapids. She had a hazy recollection of being almost smothered by monster waves, and of cruel bumps against sunken rocks ; then, before she had time to realize what had happened, she found herself in a quiet pool at the base of the cataract, bruised, dazed, and gasping, but otherwise unhurt.

Swimming to the shore, Mary gazed around for any sign of her companion. But of the canoe and Young Eagle there was nothing to be seen.

Then a distant cry from the forest behind warned her that the Delawares were coming, and that she must hide. Gazing desperately around for some place of concealment, Mary espied the hollow trunk of a dead tree lying on the very edge of the stream. With a prayer that it might not prove to be the lair of some wild beast, the girl crawled into the dark hole.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ATTACK ON THE SETTLEMENT.

Cowering fearfully in the hollow log, Mary listened to the approach of the Delawares. They were walking along the bank of the river, looking for signs of the smashed canoe and its unfortunate occupants, and presently they came so near that Mary could hear them talking to one another.

Suddenly Mary's hiding place shook, and from just above her head came a loud "Huh!" Two of the Indians had actually sat down upon the hollow log, all unaware that within a foot of them lay the Pale-face girl they were seeking. Hardly daring to breathe, Mary lay in an agony of fear, and expected every moment to be discovered. If they once suspected that the log was hollow, she was lost, indeed; for they had but to step into the shallow water by the bank, and they would be sure to see her.

To the terrified girl it seemed hours that the two Indians sat talking upon the log. Her poor tired body was racked with cramp; yet she dared not move a muscle, lest she should make some sound which would reach the sharp ears of the Indians above. But at last the Red Men moved away, and, with a sob of relief, Mary realized that, for the moment at least, the danger of discovery was over.

Presently Mary began to wonder what had happened to Young Eagle. If he had escaped from the rapids, he would come to look for her, she felt sure. Then she suddenly thought of her mother and father and friends, and conjured up a picture of their going to bed that night, and later waking up, with the sound of the terrible war-whoop in their ears, to be struck down before they could seize arms to defend themselves.

At the thought Mary began to wriggle out of her hiding place. She must try to reach home, and warn them at whatever risk to herself. And then she remembered that the Indians' favourite time for attack was the hour before dawn. There was plenty of time. She had better wait for darkness to hide her from her foes, before she left the friendly shelter of her log.

Slowly the sun sank lower and lower, and Mary heard no more of the Indians, nor did she see any sign of Young Eagle. At last it was quite dark; and, having crawled forth from her log, the girl set off through the forest towards her home.

Now, indeed, the knowledge gained in all the years she had spent amongst the wilds stood her in good stead. The woods were full of savage Indians, gathering to attack the Pale-face settlement; but none of them saw Mary as she flitted from shadow to shadow, or heard her as her moccasined feet

carried her through the forest without the breaking of a twig, or the rustle of a leaf.

At last, after many perils, Mary stood on the border of the clearing, in the centre of which stood the settlement where she had spent all her life. There was the familiar stockade surrounding the dozen or more log huts and sturdy block-house. How quiet it all was! Everybody seemed to be asleep. After a swift glance at the dark surrounding forest, Mary sped across the clearing towards the gate of the settlement.

Picking up a stone, Mary banged with all her might upon the heavy planks which formed the gate, and presently, to her joy, she heard her father's voice asking who was there. "It is I, Mary!" she cried. "Open, father, quickly! The woods are full of Indians, and they are going to attack the settlement."

The next moment, Mary was in her father's arms, and was briefly telling the dread news. Then, whilst he barred the gate, she ran from cabin to cabin, rousing the sleeping inmates with the alarming tidings. In a few minutes the whole settlement was awake; and, whilst the women and children carried the few valuables of the settlers from the log cabins to the block-house, the men with loaded rifles mounted guard along the stockade.

Slowly the night wore away, whilst the inhabi-

tants of the little frontier settlement kept anxious watch. Clouds hid the moon, and the surrounding forest lay dark and quiet, giving no sign of the hundreds of cruel foes that lurked within.

Briefly Mary had told the story of her adventures. "You and that Indian lad did well, my girl," said her father, when she had finished. "But for your warning the Delawares would have taken us by surprise. I know Great Thunder; he is a great warrior and a noble man. 'Tis a pity that his son should have been drowned." For Mary quite thought that Young Eagle had met his end in the cataract.

Presently the air began to grow chill, whilst the night seemed to grow darker, as it often does the hour before dawn. Everything was still, and peaceful silence lay upon the clearing and the surrounding forest. But, the next moment, the night was rent by a blood-curdling war-whoop, and the forest, which had seemed so quiet and empty, became alive with the dark figures of yelling savages who leapt from behind every bush and tree, and charged desperately towards the stockade.

As the Indians burst from the forest, a well-directed volley laid many of them low. Each man of the garrison had a woman standing beside him, ready to hand him fresh rifles, and to load those he had fired. Again and again the rifles of the settlers

rang out, but the Indians were numbered by the hundred, whilst there were but twenty white men to defend the stockade. Soon the Red Men were swarming over the rough wooden palisade in half a dozen places ; and, seeing that with their small numbers the settlers could not possibly keep the Indians out, Mary's father ordered a retreat to the block-house.

Firing as they went, the white men retreated towards the stout wooden building which served as fort and storehouse to the little community. For a time they held the Red Men in check ; and then, as the Indians made a determined rush, the last of the defenders entered the block-house, and the heavy wooden door was shut in the faces of their pursuers.

Cheated for a moment of their prey, the Indians started to plunder the deserted log cabins ; then, having taken away everything of any value to them, they set fire to the buildings. Now the night was made terrible for the white people by the ruddy flames of their blazing homes, whilst, aided by the brilliant light, scores of Indians kept up a steady fire on every loophole in the walls of the block-house.

Soon the defenders began to suffer from the fire of the enemy, and several were wounded by the bullets which were constantly entering through the loopholes. The children were made to lie flat on

the floor to escape the flying missiles ; but Mary and her mother and the other women resolutely kept at work loading the rifles of their men-folk, as quickly as they were fired at the Indians outside.

Twice the Indians made a dash for the door of the block-house, intending to batter it down with a heavy log, and twice the fire of the defenders drove them back with heavy loss. Unable to gain an entrance that way, the wily Red Men next strove to set fire to the building, and flights of burning arrows fell upon the wooden roof. But the defenders were prepared for this danger ; and, as fast as the arrows stuck spluttering in the wooden beams, buckets of water extinguished the flames.

By this time it was daylight, and peering cautiously through the loopholes, the defenders saw the blackened ruins of their homes all around them. Farther away, along the edge of the forest, puffs of smoke came from behind every bush and tree and log, followed by the crack of rifles, and the dull thud of the bullets, as they struck the walls of the block-house.

So the day wore on. Now and then a yell of defiance rose from the forest, but the enemy made no further effort to carry the block-house by storm. Meanwhile, the position of the defenders was rapidly becoming desperate. Half the men were wounded, and unable to take any further share in

the defence, and Mary and the other women now crouched beside the loopholes, ready to fire at any painted form that showed itself.

Noon came and went. As the hot drowsy afternoon dragged on, the fire of the Indians died away, and some of the weary garrison tried to snatch a little sleep.

They awoke to the crack, crack of rifles. The Indians had suddenly redoubled their fire, and every loophole in the block-house became the mark for a dozen rifles, so that it was death for the defenders to approach the openings. Then, with a fiendish yell, swarms of savages, carrying piles of brushwood, burst from amongst the trees, and came running towards the block-house.

This time the fire of the garrison failed to drive back the Red Men, who, after flinging the brushwood against the walls of the block-house, retreated, making way for other Indians who brought blazing torches. Desperately, but in vain, the defenders strove to stop these men from setting fire to the great piles of twigs and branches. The brushwood was already alight in half a dozen places, when the rifle fire from the forest suddenly died away, and there arose instead the shrieks and yells of men in mortal combat.

As by magic the attack ceased ; and, by the time the almost dazed defenders had put out the blazing

brushwood, not an enemy was to be seen in the clearing. From the forest, however, there still came the crack of rifles and the yells of fighting men, sounds which drifted farther and farther into the distance until they died away altogether.

“What has happened?” cried Mary’s mother; but nobody was able to answer her question.

Some hours later, just before sunset, a huge warrior, followed by a slim stripling, approached the block-house, his arms held above his head as a sign that he came in peace. Mary was the first to recognize Great Thunder and Young Eagle, and calling to her father and the rest of the garrison, she ran to meet them.

“The Delaware women will trouble my white brother no more!” said Great Thunder, addressing Mary’s father. “Young Eagle, who, I thought, was dead, came to my village last night, and told me of the danger of my Pale-face friends. So I and my young men made ready for war, and behold! there will be much wailing in the villages of the Delawares, for we have taken many scalps.”

“You have saved our lives, Great Thunder!” cried Mary’s father, grasping the chief by the hand. “Why did you do it?”

“Did not the White Lily save the life of Young Eagle, when he lay wounded in the hands of his enemies?” answered Great Thunder. “Huh!

But my heart was sad, when Young Eagle told me that the While Lily had been drowned in the place where the river flows over the rocks."

"I got safe to land, Great Thunder," answered Mary, "and I'm so glad Young Eagle escaped also. Thank you very much for going and fetching help, Young Eagle!"

"The son of a Seneca chief never forgets," replied the young Indian.

Young Eagle never *did* forget how Mary had nursed him while he lay wounded, and when, in course of time, he became a powerful and famous chief, he always remained friendly with the English, and fought against their enemies.

QUESTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

1.—What took Mary away from the clearing in spite of her father's warning?

2.—What were some of the things which Mary had learnt through living all her life on the frontier?

CHAPTER II.

1.—Relate the incident which led to the Delawares retracing their course for a distance up the river.

2.—How did the Delawares outwit the Iroquois who were on their trail?

CHAPTER III.

1.—What signs of war did Mary find in the Delaware village?

2.—Who was the Great Turtle, and what message did he send to the Indians?

CHAPTER IV.

1.—How was it that Young Eagle and Mary found it easy to escape?

2.—In a few words describe the war-dance.

CHAPTER V.

1.—What was the first adventure which Mary and Young Eagle had?

2.—How did they break their trail, and reach the deserted log cabin?

CHAPTER VI.

1. In this chapter we read, "In spite of all their caution the fugitives nearly came to grief." How was this?

2.—How did Young Eagle obtain a canoe?

CHAPTER VII.

1.—Describe the incident shown in the picture on page 51.

2.—How was it that the fugitives were not able to land at the head of the cataract?

CHAPTER VIII.

1.—Suppose you were Young Eagle. Give a short account of what happened to you after the canoe broke to pieces until the time you arrived at the white settlement.

2.—In what different ways did the Delawares try to capture the block-house?

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